

# HOW HE WON THE FIGHT FOR LOVE.

# "THE PLAY'S THE THING"

SHAKESPEARE

BY

CHAMPION

BOB FITZSIMMONS

FOR THE FIRST TIME HE DISCLOSES THE PLOT OF THE DRAMA. HE'S TO STAR IN NEXT SEASON



THE OPENING.—"Because you have already opened my heart; and what is mine, Ethel, is yours."

ROBERT FITZSIMMONS, champion heavy and middle weight pugilist of the world, is preparing for the stage, to make his livelihood other than by placing his terrible left against the solar plexus of those who essay to dispose of him with vengeance gloves in a twenty-four foot ring.

The production which Fitzsimmons will launch out in is not yet completed, owing greatly to the fact that it is being built in a composite sort of way; that is to say, some several play writers are taking turns out of it "to see" as Bob says, "who will come nearest his original idea of what he requires." Receiving the manuscript as he does, an act at a time, he gathers those situations which suit him best and has just about got them in such shape that the plot begins to define itself and the Thespian future of Robert Fitzsimmons is beginning to unfold.

It is a four-act melodrama with the scene in Helston, Cornwall, where Fitzsimmons was born. It will have the euphonious title of "The Hero of Helston."

The story is not a bad one and will give Fitz an opportunity to show himself in every act, in strong situations and to the best advantage in the separate qualities in which he excels.

IN my conception of a play for myself the curtain rises on a blacksmith shop with the fires glowing and the hammers leaning against anvils. It is the noon hour, and Jim Harold, the hero of the play—that is me—is tinkering away at the bench, completing a lock. He soliloquizes about its fine points when Ethel Jarrett, the daughter of Horace Jarrett, the owner of the shop, enters and asks for her father.

It is shown clearly that Harold is in love with her, and the young smith, played exclusively by me, seated on an anvil, opens his heart in a crude, bashful way, and tells Ethel of his great passion. While she thinks equally well of him she is extremely bashful, and Harold makes little headway in his love affair. Presently he turns his attention to the lock upon which he has been working, and the following dialogue ensues:

Ethel—What is that, Jim?  
Jim—A burglar-proof lock, girl. I defy any man to open it unless he has seen the works. It will make me a rich man.

Ethel—And then you can lock all your money up and it will be safe.  
Jim—Not from you. You shall have the combination.

Ethel—Why?  
Jim—Because you have already opened my heart and what is mine, Ethel, is yours, lock or no lock. (Is about to kiss her hand, whistle blows and workmen begin to come in.)

Jim (hurriedly to Ethel)—Not a word about my lock. It is the secret of my life. No one knows of its existence but you. Wait until it is patented and then, Ethel, I will share it with you.

Harold thinks he has kept the secret of his lock safely to himself, and also congratulates himself on the fact that he is making some headway with Ethel. During their conversation, however, Jack Bassett, the foreman of the shop, overhears the conversation, sees Harold make love to

Jim tremblingly fondles her bare arm, kissing it tenderly.

Jim—Never mind, Ethel. I will be all right. There, there. (Sighs and shuts eyes again.)

Ethel (to her father)—Father, where is the doctor? Cannot something be done? He must be taken away. See, his eyes are closed again. Oh, he will die! (Sobs.)

Ethel's Father—There, my child. Get up and we will carry him to some comfortable place. Don't cry. Bear up. All will be well.

Ambulance doctors enter with litter and carry Jim away.

Ethel—I will go with him.  
Ambulance Surgeon—It is better not. He will be cared for. Come in an hour. You shall know the truth.

Exit all hands, leaving Ethel.

Ethel (weeping and upstrung, bends over workbench and sobs)—He will not die. No! no! no! He is too brave to die. Oh Jim, how I love you. He was so brave. God grant that he will not die. And he did it for me. (Breaks down.)

Enter Bassett stealthily.  
Bassett—Tears for him, eh? But never a

where the Hero of Helston has been so long ill.

See, I am going after the dough.

Bassett is constantly appearing and making advances to Ethel, but, fearing that Jim will refuse to leave her under the circumstances, says nothing to him about the persistence of Bassett. You see I am not on to Bassett yet.

In the suddenness of his departure for America he forgets his lock, and sells, leaving it behind—but in the possession of his enemy—instead of in his drawer at the shop, as he supposes.

At the conclusion of the second act Ethel vows that she will marry the hero if she has to wait her whole lifetime for him to return.

Between the second and third acts there is an interval of five years, during which time Harold has all kinds of hard luck. When he arrives at San Francisco he finds that his uncle was not altogether particular about his matrimonial affairs, and that some three or four wives who claimed his name had jumped on the fortune, carried the case into the probate courts and together with the lawyers had gobbled the

list the world had ever seen.

Throughout all his victories he preserved his manhood and his honor, and never allowed his reputation to turn his head. The only time he was seen in sporting circles was when he passed to the ring from his dressing room. After his world's championship victory he absolutely retired from the ring, and practically disappeared from his old haunts.

He changed his form of dress, never spoke of the prize ring, and after five years returned to Helston, a different man, but with nearly \$100,000, which he had won in the roped arena. Don't that sound theatrical enough?

In the meantime, Old Horace Jarrett had built up a great business, owned the largest foundry in Helston, and lived with his daughter Ethel in magnificent style. Bassett was no longer his foreman, but his business adviser, and enjoyed the social atmosphere of the Jarrett mansion. Harold went to the best hotel in Helston, registered as a Joseph Johnson from America, and after walking around the town paid a visit to old Jarrett, presenting himself as a manufacturing man and in-ve-

# OR, "THE HERO OF HELSTON."



THE SCENE OF THE WAGER.—"A gentleman's check ought to be sufficient. A thousand pounds, if you say."

me to present you to my daughter, Ethel, Mr. Johnson, of America.

Ethel bows, extends her hand warmly, looks into his face.

Ethel (suddenly, and to herself)—That face! Where have I seen it before? (Recovers herself.)

Ethel—We are glad to have you with us, Mr. Johnson. Is this your first visit to Helston?

Johnson—My first, Miss Jarrett. But, I hope, not my last.

The party proceeds to the banquet table and makes merry. During the feast Bassett imbibes a little too much wine and proceeds to boast of his various inventions that have enabled the directors of the Jarrett foundry to pay dividends. Among other things, he calls attention to his most successful achievement—the invention of the Bassett burglar-proof lock—whereupon old Jarrett rises proudly and pronounces it the best lock of the kind in existence, and speaks of it as the most substantial asset in the possession of the company. One word leads to another, and finally Bassett offers to wager a large sum of money that no one without the combination of the lock can open it. His attitude toward Johnson was especially aggravating, while the latter coolly smiled at him.

Then we get to talking again.

Johnson—I always considered myself something of an expert in the matter of locks.

Bassett—Then you will wager with me?

Johnson—I held that no lock is burglar proof. You will lose.

Bassett—Then wager if you think so. (Pulls out handful of money.) Will you back your boast to open my lock?

Johnson—With the permission of my excellent host, and the ladies present I will. What amount have you on hand?

Bassett—Any amount you will. Say, one hundred pounds. Is my check sufficient?

Johnson—A gentleman's check ought to be. More, if you wish. A thousand pounds if you say. (Draws check book.) What shall it be?

Bassett (enraged)—I double it.

Johnson—Very well. Make it five thousand if you thing best.

Bassett—Two thousand will do. Who shall hold the stakes?

Johnson—Miss Jarrett. (Hands his check to her.)

Bassett also passes his check over and, arising from the table steps to the massive safe, set in the wall of the mansion. He points to it with a sneer on his face and invites Johnson to proceed at once.

The scene following is very interesting. Johnson draws a chair to the safe and begins to twist the combination. He looks at the dial plate very intently and places his ear closely to the combination, as though listening to catch the sound of the tumblers. Slowly he turns from right to left and figures mentally.

Johnson—Did you invent this lock, Mr. Bassett?

Bassett—I did.

Johnson—It is defective in many respects. You see I was onto that lock all right.

Bassett—How do you know?

Johnson—Be patient, Mr. Bassett, and I

will show you what I mean. Will you get out of the light, please.

(Bends over the combination again and listens attentively to the clicking of the tumblers, audible to the audience.)

Bassett—It will not open.

Johnson—You are mistaken. It is unlocked now. See. (Pulls door and swings it back.)

(Bassett flies into a rage and accuses him of having a knowledge of the combination and taking advantage of him.)

Bassett—You knew the combination of your own lock, didn't you?

Johnson—I have won. Miss Jarrett, how do you decide as the stakeholder?

Ethel—You have won. How you did it is no affair of mine. The safe is open. I present you with the checks.

This so enrages Bassett that he strikes Johnson in the face with his glove and creates a scene. Johnson handed his assailant his card and bowed himself out with the remark that he would be at any place arranged by Mr. Bassett's seconds, but that he would come alone.

The fourth act opens on the edge of a wooded section of the country, with the so-called Mr. Johnson waiting for his rival. He had been apprised by Bassett's seconds that it was to be a fight with the naked hands and to the death if possible. That's where he makes a bad break, you understand.

Presently Bassett arrives. His occupation has developed his muscles and he had long been regarded as the most dangerous man with his hands that had ever lived in Helston. He was accompanied by Jarrett, who, as his partner, could not neglect him. A doctor was also in attendance and several witnesses, including some burly smiths from the foundry, who had come along apparently to see fair play.

The principals remove their coats and vests, and Johnson, after rolling up his sleeves, opens his shirt front to get plenty of air. As he does so old man Jarrett catches sight of the scar across Johnson's chest. Simultaneously Bassett's eyes fall upon the wound, and both men exclaim:

"Jim Harold, the hero of Helston!"

This sudden discovery adds additional cause for war, and Bassett goes in to destroy the young blacksmith, not knowing that during his absence he had developed into the champion of the world.

The fight lasts three rounds and ends in the complete demolition of Bassett's face and the victory of the hero. As Bassett sinks to the ground, Ethel, who has anticipated some disclosure, appears on the scene, having witnessed the fight from a neighboring shrub, and falls on the hero's neck for joy.

Explanations are had, and Jim Harold, with Ethel clinging to my 44-inch measurement, remarks as the curtain falls that he is not only the original blacksmith and the inventor of the Bassett lock, but the champion pugilist of all the heavy weight and middle weights of all the world.

That's just a rough scheme, you know, but it's the right sort of a play to properly display me before the public.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT FITZSIMMONS.



THE SACRIFICE.—"With a bound I jump over the anvil, and with arms open and chest expanded place myself before my love and receive the rim of the tire, coming my way so to speak, full in the chest."

smile for me. So you love him, do you? And you have the combination to his heart.

We'll you will not enter it to stay if John Bassett knows himself. As for the lock, I will reap what harvest there is to be gleaned from that invention. Go on crying, my pretty Ethel, for your hero. When he leaves the hospital (and curse him, he will come day) I will be the patentee of the Bassett burglar proof lock. (Steps quickly to Jim's bench, takes out lock and exits.)

Ethel—And he did it for my sake. (Curtain.)

How's that for hot stuff?

This finale is intended to tear things up a good bit, so far as the audience is concerned and it will if I do the martyr act in proper shape.

As the play goes, Jim Harold spends several weeks in the hospital. Ethel is constantly by his side, and when he begins to convalesce they renew their love making and Jim receives the promise of Ethel's hand. Everything is going on swimmingly and the title of "The Hero of Helston" is conferred upon the young blacksmith by the local newspapers. Old Jarrett promises to take him into partnership and the wedding day is set. In the midst of his restoration to health he receives word from America that a relation of his who had gone to California and struck it rich in the gold regions had died and had appointed his nephew, James Harold, administrator. All of this information comes out in the garden of the hospital, where Jim and Ethel make their vows to be forever faithful to their troth.

The situation is such that Jim thinks it for the best that he go to California and settle up the estate and then return to claim his bride. It is under the circumstances agreeable all around and he takes passage on a steamship carrying freight into San Francisco, and an affectionate farewell is held in the hospital garden.

estate. That's when I lose.

This naturally rattles the young blacksmith, who looked around ready to turn his attention to anything that came along. He sought work and found it in a foundry, and tried to save some money, but high prices for all comforts kept him poor and at work.

His occupation developed his muscle wonderfully, and being a temperate young man he finally became one of the most powerful blacksmiths in the city. But that hour his reputation began to grow, and before he knew it he had left his forge and anvil for the prize ring.

He met all comers and fought every man who would dare go against him.

All the fighters in the West went down before his terrible blows, and he was called East to win new laurels. The best middleweights in the country gave up their belts to him, and he finally challenged the world to meet him in the twenty-four foot ring. By this time he was a full-fledged prize fighter and, being a little delicate about his love of boyhood years, steadfastly refrained from ever communicating with Ethel. As soon as he began to fight, he changed his name, and his identity was completely swallowed up, so that Jim Harold was to all purposes no more.

His challenge to the world was laughed at by heavyweights, but finally it was accepted and, in fourteen rounds, he had whipped the champion heavyweight of the world, and was declared the greatest pug-

tor who was looking for something good in that section. He was well spoken, a fine looking young man, with a full false beard, and Jarrett, in a whole-souled way, invited him to his home that evening, where a dinner was to be given to the directors of the Jarrett Foundry Company.

The third act opens in the dining hall of the house of Jarrett. Half of the guests have arrived, and Mr. Joseph Johnson, of America, is announced. After being shown in, he is introduced, and engages in conversation with old Jarrett.

Then there's more talk like this: Jarrett—This occasion, Mr. Johnson, is especially delightful to me because it is the anniversary of the saving of my daughter's life.

Johnson—Ah, indeed. You have a daughter, then?

Jarrett—To be sure. One of the most womanly creatures that breathes the air. I thank God continuously for her preservation.

Johnson—Is the story interesting?

Jarrett—More than that. It is heroic, romantic, but—unfulfilled. The man who stood in the path of almost certain death to save her won her hand, and then disappeared.

Johnson—Was he worthy that honor?

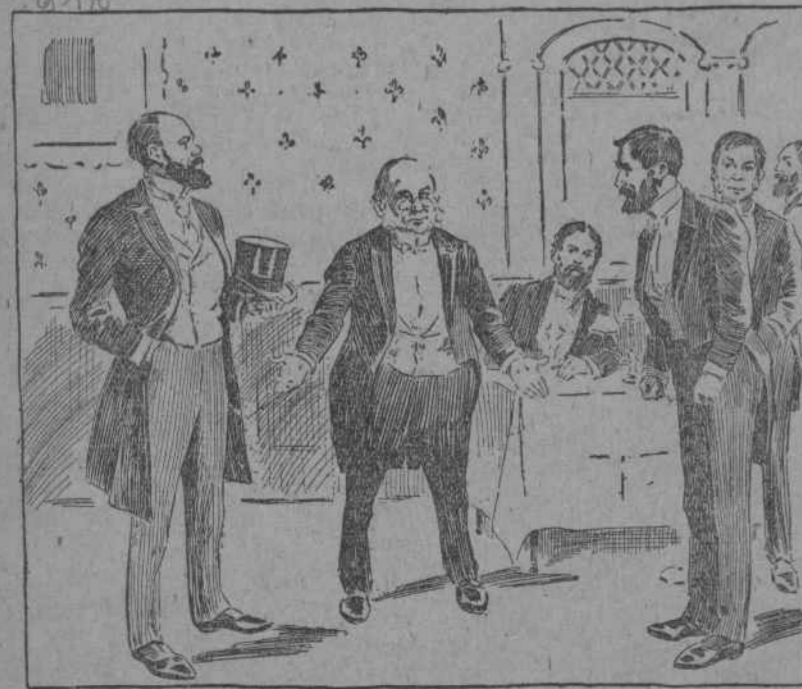
Jarrett—Yes; all of it. He was a man from his feet to the hair on his head. Yes, Jim Harold, the hero of Helston, was worthy of my daughter's hand, and I would have been proud of him as a son.

Johnson—And your daughter? Did she become reconciled to his disappearance?

Jarrett—Never. I have tried so hard to wipe out the memory. They were engaged to be married. She still grieves, poor girl! Will she ever forget? Here she comes now. Ethel!

Ethel enters.

Jarrett—My child. Mr. Johnson, permit



THE PLOT THICKENS.—The scene where Mr. Johnson (that's Fitz), appears with a false beard and money to buy back his daughter.



THE FINALE (after the chastisement of the villain).—"Ethel clinging to my forty-four chest measurement."